

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-14, 16-18 and 21-37 have been examined. Claims 18 and 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and claims 1-4, 6, 9, 10 and 22-35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 11-14, 16, 17 and 36 are allowed and claims 7, 8 and 37 contain allowable subject matter.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Sato (JP 8-156351)

The Examiner has rejected claims 18 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Sato. However, since claims 18 and 21 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claims is now moot.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Sato and Hinojosa et al. (US 6,517,179)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 9, 10 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato in view of Hinojosa. However, since claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 36 and the allowable subject matter of claim 37 has been incorporated into claim 35, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1, 10 and 35 is now moot.

Since claims 2 and 9 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 10/798,480

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Sato, Hinojosa and Teumer et al. (US 6,179,285)

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato, Hinojosa and Teumer. However, since claims 3, 4 and 6 are dependent upon claim 1, and the allowable subject matter of claim 36 has been incorporated therein, Applicant submits that claims 3, 4 and 6 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Sato and Ito et al. (US 6,196,672)

The Examiner has rejected claims 29-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato in view of Ito. However, since claims 29-34 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claims is now moot.

V. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Sato, Hinojosa and Kanemura (JP 07-009712)

The Examiner has rejected claims 22-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato, Hinojosa and Kanemura. However, since claims 22-28 are dependent upon claim 1, and the allowable subject matter of claim 36 has been incorporated therein, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 22-28 is now moot.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
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VI. Allowable Subject Matter

As set forth above, the Examiner has indicated that claims 11-14, 16, 17 and 36 are allowed and claims 7, 8 and 37 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated claim 37 into claim 35. Accordingly, claim 37 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

VII. Conclusion

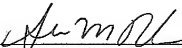
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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